CLAIMS

1.   (cancelled)

2.   (cancelled)

3.   (cancelled)

4.   (previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein said messages comprise instant messages.

5.   (cancelled)

6.   (previously presented) The method of claim 35, further comprising steps of:

sending a message to said mobile device by said sender;

receiving said message at said instant messaging system;

capturing said sender's personal identifier by an instant messaging system;

assigning a routing code to said sender's personal identifier; and sending said message to said mobile device.

7.   (previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein said step of transmitting the reply message to the sender comprises steps of:

receiving a message at said mobile device from said sender, wherein said sender's personal identifier has previously been associated with a routing code; and

replying to said received message by means of a `reply` function on said mobile unit.

8.   (cancelled)

9.   (previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein routing codes for assignment are recycled during a user session on said mobile unit if the number of senders exceeds the routing codes available.

10.   (previously presented) The method of claim 35, further comprising the step of:

preventing occurrence of a condition wherein different senders are associated with the same routing code.

11.   (currently amended) The method of claim 10, wherein said step of preventing comprises any of the steps of:

delaying delivery of a message from said <u>sender</u> pending confirmation of a mobile user's desire to receive said message; and

providing sufficient routing codes that recycling of codes is unlikely to be necessary.

12.   (cancelled)

13.   (cancelled)

14.   (cancelled)

15.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 37, wherein said messages comprise instant messages.

16.   (cancelled)

17.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 37, said method further comprising steps of:

sending a message to said mobile device by said sender;

receiving said message at said instant messaging system;

capturing said sender's personal identifier by an instant messaging system;

assigning a routing code to said sender's personal identifier; and

sending said message to said mobile unit.

18.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 37, wherein said step of transmitting the reply message to the sender comprises steps of:

receiving a message at said mobile unit from said sender, wherein said sender's personal identifier has previously been associated with a routing code; and

replying to said received message by means of a `reply` function on said mobile unit.

19.   (cancelled)

20.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 37, wherein routing codes for assignment are recycled during a user session on said mobile unit if the number of senders exceeds the routing codes available.

21.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 37, said method further comprising the step of:

preventing occurrence of a condition wherein different senders are associated with the same routing code.

22.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 21, wherein said step of preventing comprises any of the steps of:

delaying delivery of a message from said sender pending confirmation of a mobile user's desire to receive said message; and

providing sufficient routing codes that recycling of codes is unlikely to be necessary.

23.   (cancelled)

24.   (cancelled)

25.   (cancelled)

26.   (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein said messages comprise instant messages.

27.   (cancelled)

28.   (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein said means for exchanging messages comprises means for:

sending a message to said mobile device by said sender;

receiving said message at said instant messaging system;

capturing said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

assigning a routing code to said sender's personal identifier; and

sending said message to said mobile unit.

29.   (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein said means for transmitting the reply message to the sender comprises means for:

receiving a message at said mobile unit from said sender, wherein said sender's personal identifier has previously been associated with a routing code; and

replying to said received message by means of a `reply` function on said mobile unit.

30.   (cancelled)

31.   (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein routing codes for assignment are recycled during a user session on said mobile unit if the number of users exceeds the routing codes available.

32.   (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising means for:

preventing occurrence of a condition wherein different senders are associated with the same routing code.

33.   (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein said means for preventing comprises means for any of:

delaying delivery of a message from a sender pending confirmation of a mobile user's desire to receive said message; and

providing sufficient routing codes for assignment to said that recycling of codes is unlikely to be necessary.

34.   (currently amended) A method of facilitating messaging between a mobile device and a sender, the method comprising steps of:

providing a plurality of reserved routing codes for exchanging messages between senders and mobile devices;

in response to receiving a message from the sender directed to the mobile device, temporarily associating one of the routing codes with the sender for the duration of the user session on said mobile device;

including the temporarily associated routing code in the message as a reply address; and

transmitting the reply message with the included temporarily associated routing code to the mobile device;

the method further comprising the steps of:

composing a message for the sender at said mobile device, said message including at least said sender's personal identifier in body of said message;

sending said message to a routing code assigned to an `unlisted` function on said mobile device;

receiving said message at an instant messaging system;

capturing said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

temporarily assigning a routing code from said plurality of reserved routing codes to said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

sending said message to said sender; and

returning notice of said assignment to said mobile unit.

35.   (previously presented) The method of claim 34, further comprising:

receiving a reply message from the mobile device directed to the temporarily associated routing code; and

transmitting the reply message to the sender.

36.   (previously presented)   A computer program product, said computer program product comprising a tangible medium with computer-readable code embodied thereon said computer-readable code including code means for performing the steps of a method of facilitating messaging between a mobile device and a sender the method comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of reserved routing codes for exchanging messages between senders and mobile devices;

in response to receiving a message from the sender directed to the mobile device, temporarily associating one of the routing codes with the sender, for the duration of the user session on said mobile device;

including the temporarily associated routing code in the message as a reply address; and

transmitting the message with the included temporarily associated routing codes to the mobile device;

the method further comprising the steps of:

composing a message for said sender at said mobile device, said message including at least said sender's personal identifier in body of said message;

sending said message to a routing code assigned to an `unlisted` function on said mobile device;

receiving said message at an instant messaging system;

capturing said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

temporarily assigning a routing code from said plurality of reserved routing codes to said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

sending said message to said sender; and

returning notice of said assignment to said mobile unit.

37.   (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 36, the method further comprising:

receiving a reply message from the mobile device directed to the temporarily associated routing code; and

transmitting the reply message to the sender.

38.   (currently amended) An apparatus for facilitating messaging between a mobile device and a sender comprising:

a plurality of reserved routing codes for exchanging messages between senders and mobile devices;

in response to receiving a message from the sender directed to the mobile device, temporarily associating one of the routing codes with the sender for the duration of the user session on said mobile device;

means for including the temporarily associated routing code in the message as a reply address; and

transmitting the message with the included temporarily associated routing codes to the mobile device;

the apparatus further comprising means for:

composing a message for said sender at said mobile device, said message including said sender's personal identifier in body of said message;

sending said message to a routing code assigned to an `unlisted` function on said mobile device;

receiving said message at an instant messaging system;

capturing said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

temporarily assigning a routing code from said plurality of reserved routing codes to said sender's personal identifier by said instant messaging system;

sending said message to said sender; and

returning notice of said assignment to said mobile unit.

39.   (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 38, further comprising:

means for receiving a reply message from the mobile device directed to the temporarily associated routing code; and

means for transmitting the reply message to the sender.